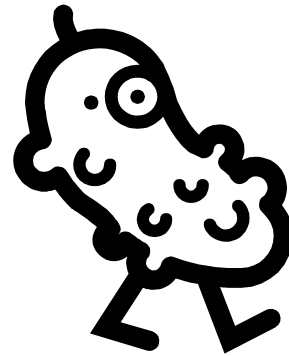


## **ALIEN AUTOPSY (THE AUTOPSY OF A DILL PICKLE)**

### **BACKGROUND:**

An autopsy is the examination of a dead body and is performed primarily to determine the cause of death and to identify the disease states present. It is also known as a post mortem examination. In academic institutions, autopsies are also requested for teaching and research purposes. Forensic autopsies are cases with legal implications and are performed to determine if a given death was an accident, homicide, suicide, or a natural event. The word autopsy is derived from the Greek word autopsyia: "to see with one's own eyes."



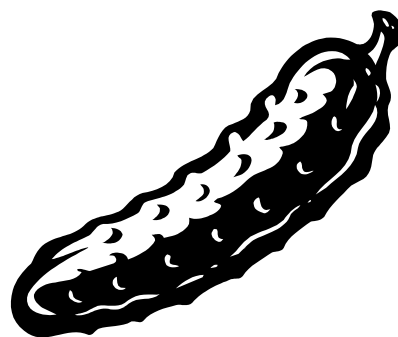
### **OBJECTIVES:**

- To simulate the steps in an autopsy
- To use the anatomical terminology covered in Activity #3 when performing the autopsy

### **MATERIALS:**

Pickle  
Dissecting equipment  
Electronic balance

Dissecting pan  
Tape measure  
Digital camera



## **PREPARATION:**

Become familiar with your equipment. Match the piece of equipment with the correct picture.

\_\_\_\_\_ Scalpel

\_\_\_\_\_ Scissors

\_\_\_\_\_ Forceps

\_\_\_\_\_ Sharp probes

\_\_\_\_\_ Dissecting Pan

\_\_\_\_\_ Blunt probe

\_\_\_\_\_ Dissecting Pins

\_\_\_\_\_ Dropper

## **EXTERNAL EXAMINATION:**

Measurements:

1. Use the ruler or tape measure at your station to determine the length, width, and circumference (in centimeters) of your patient. Record the measurements on the Autopsy Report.
2. Take your patient to one of the electronic balances and determine the mass (in grams) of your patient.

Distinguishing Marks:

3. Examine both the dorsal and ventral surfaces of your patient for abnormalities such as wounds or scars from injuries or surgeries. Label the dorsal view and ventral view on the diagrams shown in the Autopsy Report. On each view, draw and label each abnormality you find on your patient.

## **INTERNAL EXAMINATION:**

4. The ventral body cavity is opened by a deep Y-shaped incision. The arms of the Y start at the anterior surface of shoulders and join at the inferior point of the breastbone (sternum) to form a single cut that extends to the pubic area.
  - a. Before making the incision, use the dissecting pins to mark each shoulder (the arms of the Y incision), the inferior point of the sternum, and the pubic area.
  - b. Have your teacher check the dissecting pin locations for accuracy.
  - c. Label the Y incision landmarks (R. Shoulder, L. Shoulder, Inferior Sternum, and Pubic Region) on the appropriate diagram in the Internal Examination section of the Autopsy Report.
  - d. **Carefully** use the scalpel to make the Y incision.

5. After making the Y incision, the abdominopelvic region can be opened like hinged doors to expose the internal organs. The contents of the thoracic cavity will also be visible. This stage of the autopsy includes careful examination of many or all of the internal organs. If the brain is to be examined, a portion of the skull must be removed. The face, arms, and legs are usually not dissected unless there is a specific reason for doing so.
  - a. Open the body of your patient by pulling back the flaps of skin made during the Y incision.
  - b. Locate the thoracic and abdominopelvic areas (or at least where they would be located if this were a human.)
  - c. Label the thoracic and abdominopelvic areas on the appropriate diagram in the Internal Examination section of the Autopsy Report.
  - d. Draw and label internal organs located within the thoracic and abdominopelvic areas.

### **CHEMICAL/DRUG TESTING:**

6. Collect a sample of body fluid using the dropper. Test the pH of the body fluid using pH paper. Place one drop of body fluid on a piece of pH paper. The pH paper will change color depending on the pH of the body fluid. Compare the color of your pH paper with those shown in the pH color chart. Record the pH in the Autopsy Report.
7. Based on body fluid pH, indicate whether the fluids are **acidic** (pH below 7), **basic** (pH above 7), **neutral** (pH = 7) or **within normal range**. The normal range for pH in the body is 7.35 to 7.45.

### **PREPARATION FOR BURIAL**

8. After the autopsy, the patient is prepared for burial. Return all organs to the appropriate body cavity and close the Y-incision flaps. Wrap the patient in a paper towel and have a brief memorial service to show respect for the dead. Bury your patient by placing him/her in the closest trash can.

### **CONCLUSION**

9. Based on the evidence collected from the examination, you need to determine the cause of death. Check the appropriate box on the Autopsy Report to indicate the cause of death.
10. You must provide evidence to support your cause of death determination. You get to make this part up. You must accurately use the following terms: dorsal, ventral, thoracic, abdominopelvic, inferior, superior, superficial, and deep. Record your evidence in the Evidence section on the Autopsy Report.

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# Autopsy Report

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Performed by Drs. \_\_\_\_\_

Coroners, on this day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year of \_\_\_\_\_

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## EXTERNAL EXAMINATION:

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### MEASUREMENTS:

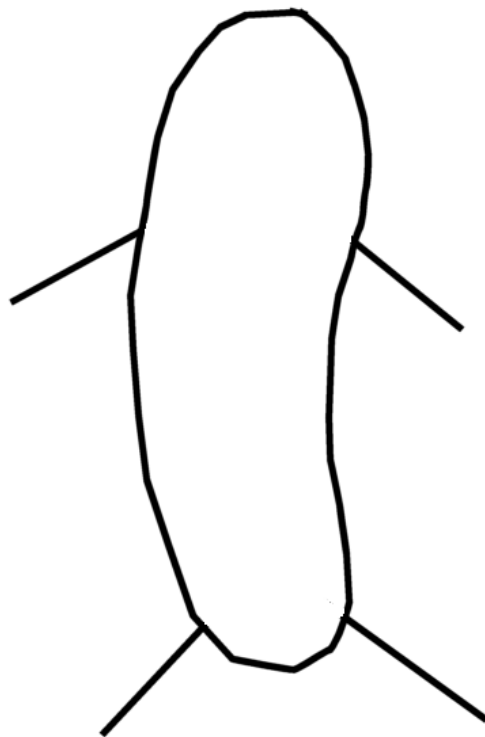
MASS (G)	LENGTH (CM)	WIDTH (CM)	CIRCUMFERENCE (CM)

### DISTINGUISHING MARKS:

View:



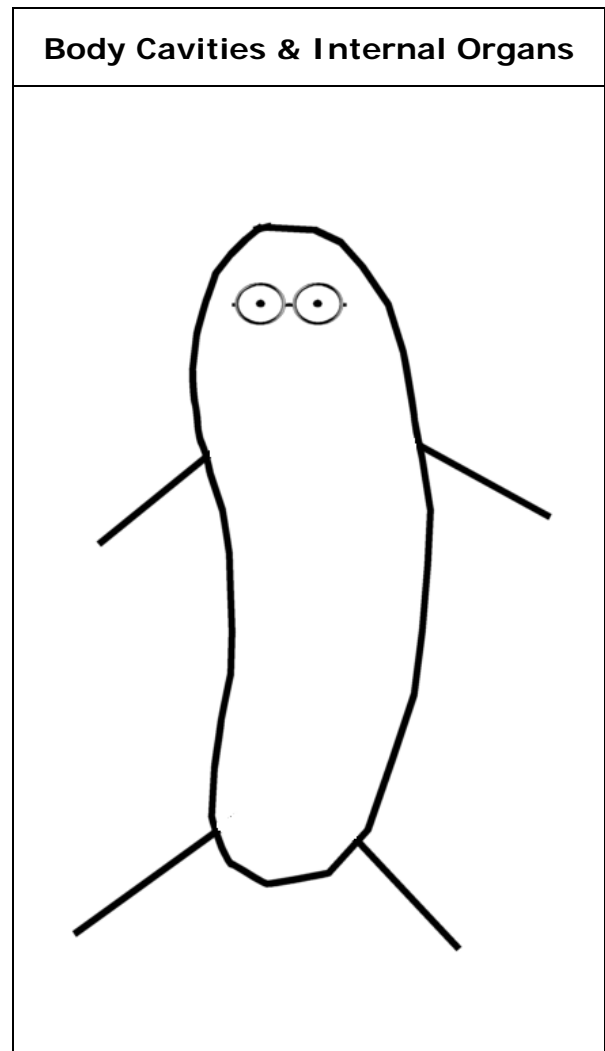
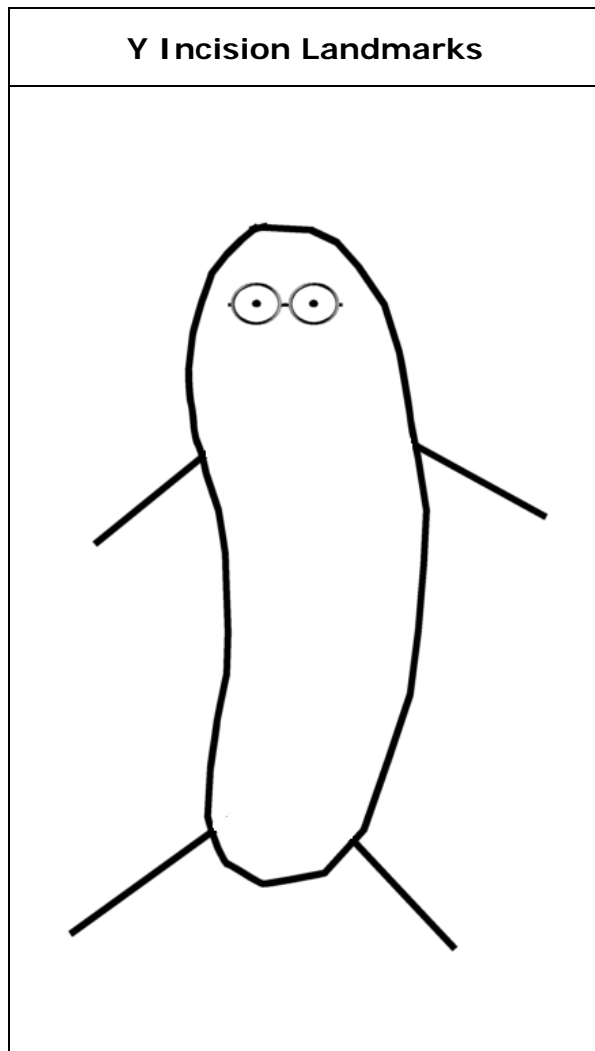
View:



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**INTERNAL EXAMINATION:**

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**CHEMICAL/DRUG TESTING:**

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<b>Body fluid pH:</b>	<b>Body fluids are: (circle one)</b> Acidic, Basic, Neutral, or Within Normal Ranges
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## ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS:

<b>Cause of Death:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Accident	<input type="checkbox"/> Homicide	<input type="checkbox"/> Suicide	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Causes
<b>Evidence:</b>			